Government has instituted several schemes to assist young scientists. Some of them are as follows —

- Ramanujan fellowships to attract brilliant scientists including young scientists from all over the world;
- JC Bose fellowships to recognize active scientists who have a proven outstanding track record;
- Ramanna fellowships aimed at supporting outstanding project investigators on a continuous basis;
- Shyama Prasad Mukherjee fellowships targeted at talented postgraduate students;
- CSIR Diamond Jubilee Technology Awards for Innovators for developing technology of highest benchmarks of competitiveness;
- Women Scientists Scheme to provide opportunities to women scientists to re-enter mainstream research;
- Indian National Science Academy and Indian Academy of Sciences Young Scientists/Young Associateship Awards Swarnajayanti fellowships for outstanding young scientists;
- Biotechnology Post-Doctoral fellowships Bioscience Awards for career development;
- Fast Track Scheme for Young Scientists for granting research projects to young scientists with or without employment;
- CSIR Young Scientists Awards etc. All these initiatives are aimed at providing encouragement and assistance to young scientists and checking brain drain from the country.

Stem Cell Research

1112. SHRIK. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of formulating a policy on Stem Cell Research;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are taking any assistance or help from the US on Stem Cell Research; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, India is in the process of formulating a policy of stem cell research. At present the Draft National Guidelines are being finalized jointly by the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Department of Biotechnology based on which the policy will evolve.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, Experts were invited from USA to discuss setting up of current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) facility in January, 2006, potential applications of mesenchymal stem cells in September 2005 and for clinical trial workshop in June, 2005.

Earthquake prediction

1113. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether French, Japanese and few other countries' scientists have been applying satellite data for earthquake prediction;

(b) if so, whether there is a need for disaster prediction, prevention and mitigation;

(c) if so, whether Government have any plan for development of warning system; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) The satellite data has been used by geoscientists in different countries in research and development related to earthquakes. Satellite data has proved inadequate in earthquake prediction. However, at present there is no scientific technique available anywhere in the world to predict the occurrence of earthquake with reasonable degree of accuracy in terms of space, time and magnitude. However, losses due to earthquake may be considerably reduced through proper planning and adoption of building codes prepared by Bureau of Indian Standards.

(c) and (d) At present the scientific knowledge for predicting earthquakes is inadequate. It is not feasible to establish a warning system for earthquakes.